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A CHAPTER ON CHAIRMEN.

Of all the social duties imposed upon mankind, presupposed to require no special training, the duties of Chairmanship stand out perhaps pre-eminent for the perfunctory manner in which they are performed. To the fulfilment of these duties all sorts and conditions of men are called under all varieties of time, place, and circumstance. In Halls, Council-chambers, Exchanges, and what not, men are summoned to preside over their gregarious fellow-men, and it is small wonder if they prove at times as ill fitted to cope with their audience, as that audience occasionally proves itself unable to appreciate its Chairman. Forgetful that the office is honorary, that the unfortunate Chairman has perchance had his greatness thrust upon him, that he feels it an honour unto which he was not born, and which he would fain have evaded, those under him rebel openly and without mercy; just as certain occupiers of the Chair, being dressed in a little brief authority, know, or at least show, no mercy to their audience. One of this sort will keep his auditory, if not listening, yet in the act to listen, to his own most sweet voice, purling out his platitudes beyond the limits of human endurance.

Take, for instance, the Solemn Chairman: it is the humour of his character to be utterly without the sense of humour; he takes the chair as he takes life—as a tough beefsteak, to be got through at some expense to the jaws, costing his digestion somewhat and testing his temper, but filling a vacuum, and not altogether distasteful by reason of a due accompaniment of condiments, the buttered parsnips of flattery, or the stimulating Universal Relish of applause. The Solemn Chairman is essentially an elderly man; he dresses carefully for the occasion, and makes notes, which, when the time comes, are a pain and sorrow to him to decipher. Then is he a living illustration of the proverb, that to err is human, for he er—ers at every other word. Of preternatural gravity—and no mute ever exhibited more decent dejection of demeanour—he is oblivious of all byplay amongst his co-mates and brothers of the platform; oblivious also, as becomes so much sagacity, of the lapse of so small a thing as time. Generous as Dogberry himself, he would bestow all his tediousness upon us and all at once. Not seldom he requires a little extraneous aid, a certain amount of wire-pulling, to induce him to execute that important part of speech which consists in the cessation of it. A cough, a sigh, a change of attitude on the part of some one near him, who feels perhaps his own prospective eloquence in danger of being curtailed by the length of the good man's harangue, rouses him to consider his peroration, and a conclusion is thus sometimes arrived at. Sometimes, but not always, a check will now and then act like the cutting of a worm in two; that which was the tail—the end, is by the very force of the disruption endowed with new life, and becomes another and perhaps longer length of crawling sinuousness.

A speech of the nature above hinted at, we once heard brought to a conclusion, however, by a seasonable interruption which happened in this wise. A clerical grandee had been invited to give éclat to a local prize distribution at the Grammar School by taking the chair and distributing the certificates and awards. On a warm July afternoon, the boys, duly arrayed in clean collars and shining faces, with eyes drawn irresistibly to the imposing array of volumes placed on a table on the platform, had listened first cheerfully, then patiently, then despairingly, to the outpouring of the oratory with which their reverend tormentor was surcharged. The head-master and his coadjutors sat with heads decently declined on their hands, meditating perhaps their own forthcoming orations, or putting as much sagacity and ease into their appearance as they found convenient. Gradually the drenching from the powerful spray of the chairman's interminable rhetoric was reducing all to a dead level of misery. Still he bore on full sail: illustrations, admonitions, exhortations, streaming

like pennons from his mast-head. Delighted with the ripple and surge of his own silvery declamation, want of breath at last induced an instant's interval. He drew in a deep inspiration: another moment and the sails, now idly flapping, would have refilled, and again he would have been gliding over our heads, drawing deep furrows on our backs, when in the very nick of time a youngster in the front row of boys gave artless vent to a yawn so loud, so long, so opportune, that smiles broke out irrepressibly among the audience; the heads on the platform, decently dipped before, dived yet a little lower; a subtle electric current charged with the rebellion latent in the lines of chairs made itself somehow felt even by the remorseless rhetorician himself. He swayed to and fro uneasily, yawing as it were, then fell off before the wind, and murmuring a few hasty closing sentences, sat down to the music of ringing applause.

Some of our older readers may remember that in Albert Smith's lecture on Mont Blanc his St Bernard dog used to do him good service by yawning aloud, and thus giving the brilliant lecturer an opportunity of making a point by remarking that no wonder the poor animal was tired of it—he had heard the story so often. Even so our little lad had as unconsciously enabled the audience to score, by breaking off our Solemn Chairman's oration with a similar pandiculation.

In quite another light does he who may be denominated the Comic Chairman regard *his* duties. The whole affair is a joke; the brisker the speeches, the greater the laughter, no matter how raised, the greater his satisfaction. If he be the prize-giver, he will begin by assuring his young friends that he can see they don't want any advice from *him*—what *they* want is their prizes; he can see the hungry glances they are casting at the bountiful supply of provisions on the table before him, and he is not the man to debar them one five minutes from their well-earned meal. When he, their Chairman, wants his dinner and his dinner is ready, he likes to have it, and without any palaver. He would not thank any one, not even Mr Blank—here a bow to that gentleman on the platform, for whose eloquence the Comic Chairman has the greatest secret antipathy—he would not even thank Mr Blank to come and talk to him and keep him waiting for his repast without rhyme or reason. This possibly raises a laugh, and in the enjoyment of it the Chairman will not improbably fall into the very error he has been deprecating, and indulge in a more lengthy and less rather than more humorous speech.

When the actual distribution at last arrives, the Comic Chairman is quite in his element. He takes care to possess himself of the list of the prize-takers, and while the head-master is pounding through his report, and the more or less complimentary—generally less rather than more—observations of the Board of Examiners —while this is taking place, the Comic Chairman, apparently profoundly attentive, is in reality conning impromptus to be bestowed with the prize on each recipient. Woe to any unfortunately shy lad possessing a name capable of being punned upon, for, rely on it, the Comic Chairman will strike the shrinking sufferer and spare not!

Of another genus is the Learned Chairman, a man who talks quite over the heads of his audience, and who is very much applauded for that reason, the canine race not being alone in their love of listening to what they cannot quite comprehend. This learned pundit will close his eyes, and soothed by the *susurrus* of the reporters' pencils, and flattered by the submissive applause of his listeners, he will deliver his soul of much far-fetched, painfully-carried, and slowly-delivered erudition. His puzzled hearers try in vain to take hold of the thread of his discourse; but it is a mass of threads, one only serving to remind the speaker of another. The web is learning, the warp is learning, it is dyed in grain with learning; and the applause at the close of the Learned Chairman's lecture is indeed appreciative—of its termination.

In marked contrast to this gentleman's Chairmanship is that of the man whose education has been outstripped by the march of time, so to speak. This same march of time and the power of accumulated wealth have together elevated this 'merchant' into what he never fails to describe as the proud position of Chief Magistrate of this ancient and loyal borough of Speechy-cum-Spluttering. Never but once has he been heard to speak disrespectfully of so discriminating a constituency as that which elected him to do him and itself honour. On that occasion, his parliamentary candidate having been unseated for bribery, he was heard publicly to characterise his native Speechy-cum-Spluttering as the most 'corrupt and immaculate' borough in the country.

It was our privilege once to listen to him when, filling the office of Chairman at the annual meeting of a local School of Art, he deemed it necessary to address his audience on Art. Carefully arrayed for the occasion with white waistcoat, diamond ring, orchid buttonhole, and a bandana that he waved continually in front of him like a punkah, he commenced his oration, oracularly, as follows: 'Ladies and gentlemen—The 'and is accessorary to the eye; without the 'and, the eye would be impowerless to perdoose the numbrous imperishless performances he saw 'ung around him pulpably on these walls.' As one of Shakespeare's clowns relies on 'O lord, sir!' as an effectual help to answer any query, so did this learned speaker rely on one word to do him yeoman's service; it was—'elsewhere,' pronounced 'el-swear.' It figured continually in his speech along with Cobbett's French Grammar, which last, like the fly in the amber, still puzzles us to account for its whereabouts. For some half-hour or so the pupils had been reminded of the advantages available here and not available 'el-swear;' the head-master had been congratulated on the training which, 'el-swear' gained, had enabled him to draw out native talent here—he, himself occupying the proud position of Chief Magistrate of that ancient and loyal borough, felt that here,

and not 'el-swear,' lay the scene of his duties; and so on. And here occurred a little interlude which helped to graft the occasion firmer in our minds.

A coadjutor on the platform having arrested his Worship's attention by touching his elbow and whispering to him, the orator paused—with suspended bandana—his eye roving wildly over his auditory. Presently that eye became fixed; the bandana was now waved gracefully, and in an encouraging manner he began again to lift up his voice. We should mention that there happened that evening to be in the assembly a local antiquary and F.R.S., a man painfully shy and retiring, almost a recluse, but who had been tempted thither to witness the bestowal of some distinction on the nephew of a friend for some architectural drawing in which he, the F.R.S., had taken a friendly interest. Imagine, therefore, Mr Blankeney's feelings when the following sentence fell upon his ears: 'I am told,' said his Worship with gracious condescension, 'that there is in this room—and not where he ought to be on this platform, but el-swear in this room, a gentleman as knows all about art—p'raps he'll be kind enough to tell us a little about it.—Mr Blankeney, sir, come forward, come forward!' Here the beckoning of the bandana was renewed effusively.

Finding himself thus cruelly signalled out from his fellow-listeners, with every eye in the room fixed on him in the death-like silence that succeeded that commanding invitation to 'come forward!' Mr Blankeney rose to his feet, turning first scarlet, then purple, and shaking in every limb, muttered a few inaudible words of protest and denial; and the door being luckily near at hand, he beat so rapid a retreat from the scene of his discomfiture as to sacrifice his baggage even—his greatcoat, hat, and umbrella, which *impedimenta* a waiter recovered for him some ten minutes later, by which time it may be presumed the owner had finished shaking the dust off his feet in testimony against the inhospitable breach, committed in his person, on the modesty of private life.

Then we have had in our day the painfully Humble Chairman, whose whole speech is composed of egotistical proclamations of his own incapacity to fulfil in any degree his exalted idea of the duties of chairmanship. He is on the whole more exasperating even than the Imitative Chairman, who has taken Mr Oscar Wilde as his pattern, and who drawls and twaddles with an air of mingled patronage and offensive superiority highly edifying to listen to.

The best of all Chairmen that we have been called upon, in a tolerably long experience, to 'suffer and be still' under (or to appreciate and be grateful to), the best by far is the cool-headed business man who knows his work and does it, and keeps the platform-palavering within decent bounds; who smiles at flattery, and indulges in no 'soft-sawder' himself; who can hear opposite views to his own expounded with patience, and forbear even a *sotto voce* 'Hear, hear' when his own ideas are expressed. Speaking of 'soft-sawder' reminds us how large an amount of 'butter' is expended in platform oratory: sometimes we have thought that each man there must secretly regard the others as enemies, whose mouths—as in the Indian tale—must be closed by a little pat of dexterously-aimed 'ghee' or fresh butter, to prevent their following them to their disadvantage.

DUMARESQ'S DAUGHTER.

BY GRANT ALLEN, AUTHOR OF 'IN ALL SHADES,' 'THIS MORTAL COIL,' ETC.

CHAPTER XX.—AT BAY.

AWAY over in Africa, the outlook was still gloomier. The 25th of January had come at Khartoum. That long, long siege drew slowly to its close. The end was not far off now. On the 13th, the fort of Omdurman, beyond the river, had fallen bodily into the enemy's hands. Starvation and disease were working their way ruthlessly among the remaining defenders. The Mahdi's troops were pressing like jackals about the fated city. It was whispered among the faithful in the town that Faragh Pasha, who kept the Messalamieh Gate, had been holding communications with the besieger's emissaries. The air was thick, as in all beleaguered cities, with vague flying rumours of suspected treachery. Everywhere doubt, panic, uncertainty: everywhere the manifold form of indefinite suspicion. And behind it all, the solemn reality of a certain fate staring them in the face. Unless relief came in six days more, the garrison must surrender out of pure hunger.

But still there was hope, for Wolseley was advancing. The army of rescue was well on its way. Stewart had reached the Abu Klea wells. The Mahdi's forces had been defeated at Gubat. Brave English hearts were eager to release them. By strange unknown sources, by the tales of deserters, by the curious buzzing gossip of the bazaars, news of what was happening in the outer world leaked in, bit by bit, from time to time through the wall of besiegers to the famished garrison. It was known that if the defenders could hold out for one week longer, reinforcements would arrive in river steamers before the quays of Khartoum. So they hoped and hoped, and despaired, and waited.

On that eventful Sunday, the 25th of January, while the notables of the town, pressed hard by hunger, were on their way to the Palace to urge Gordon once more to surrender at discretion, three Europeans sat talking together in eager colloquy by the Bourré Gate on the south front of the city. One of them was a soldier in semi-English uniform; the other two belied their nationality by their complete acceptance of the Arab costume.

'Had any breakfast this morning, Linnell?' Sir Austen asked with good-humoured stoicism, the frank cheery stoicism which the English aristocrat makes it almost a point of honour to display in difficult circumstances. 'By George, what one would give for a British beefsteak now! Tender, juicy, with potato chips! The first thing I shall do when I get back to England is to order a steak, grilled over the fire, and a dish of potatoes. Taste good, won't it, with a pint of Bass, after so many months of nothing better than roast donkey!'

'*When* ye get back, is it?' Considine murmured half to himself, with irrepressible Celtic

spirit. '*If* ye get back, you mean surely, Sir Austen; for as things go at present, I'm glad for me own part I didn't waste me precious money on taking a return ticket. Me poor old mother'll be the richer for that same when she comes into me property after the Mahdi's eaten us up. Linnell and I had a prime breakfast, though—for Khartoum. A ration of gum and some pounded palm fibre, and half a rat each, as well as a piece of Indian-meal bread.'

'You're in luck!' Sir Austen echoed, smacking his lips at the rat. 'I haven't tasted a morsel to eat myself this morning yet. There's breakfast waiting for me up at the Palace, but the fire was so heavy on the gate till just now that I've had no time to turn and rest till this minute.'

'And what do you think of things generally now?' Linnell asked quietly. 'Shall we be able to hold out till Stewart's party arrives, or shall we have to surrender under the very nose of the expeditionary force at the last moment?'

Sir Austen shook his head gravely. 'Neither one nor the other,' he answered, like a soldier as he was, with the solemn note of supreme conviction. 'Don't suppose for a minute we're going to escape. The Mahdi's playing with us like a cat with a mouse. It increases his prestige to keep us dawdling. He knows Stewart's force has reached Metamneh. He knows we can't hold out till the relief arrives. Mark my words; he'll assault us to-morrow as sure as fate; and in our present feeble and hungry condition, we can't pretend to resist his numbers.'

'True for you!' the Irishman put in with reckless bravery. 'Our niggers are too empty and too tired to fight anny more. When Wolseley comes, he'll come to find us all beautiful specimens for the College of Surgeons. I can see meself stuck up in a glass case: "Skeleton of the late Mr T. A. Considine; typical example of the Black Celts of Ireland!"'

'And if an assault's made, what shall you do?' Linnell asked with scarcely trembling lips.

His cousin looked back at him like an English soldier. 'Die fighting to the last by Gordon's side,' he answered unhesitatingly.

'Hear, hear!' the Irishman echoed with martial enthusiasm. 'The blood of our ancestors spurs us on to action. We'll be worthy of the fighting Considines of County Cavan.'

Linnell looked them full in the face for one minute in doubt. Then he made up his mind to speak his thought freely. 'Austen,' he said, turning round to his kinsman with a frankly cordial air, 'we're cousins after all. Till we came to Khartoum, we never really knew one another. This siege has brought us face to face at last. Here, we've learned to be brothers at heart, as we ought to be. There were faults on both sides, no doubt—misapprehensions, misconceptions, groundless fears; but we've forgotten them all, and corrected our impressions.'

Sir Austen seized his cousin's hand warmly. 'Charlie,' he said—'let me call you Charlie—you're a good fellow, and I know it now. There's nothing like a siege to make men friends. If ever we two get back to England alive, we'll stand on very different terms with one another henceforth from any we stood on before we came here.'

'Very well,' Linnell went on gravely, returning his grasp. 'We'll fight to the last, if you will, with Gordon. But we needn't make up our minds to die, unless the Mahdi's people insist upon killing us. For my own part, I've reasons for wishing to return. There are other mistakes I feel I should clear up. I'm not a soldier, like you, Austen; but if we must be attacked, I'll stop at the gate here and fight it out like a man by your side. Still, I want to say one thing to you; and to you, too, Considine, for it's always well to be prepared against all emergencies. I speak Arabic, and I know the ways and manners of Islam as well as I know the streets of London or Paris. If the worst comes to the worst, as come it will, stick by me both of you. If we're all killed, well and good; somebody in England will be all the richer for it. But if by any stroke of luck we should manage to survive, remember, you stand no chance alone; you're both too obviously and unmistakably Christian to run the gantlet of the Mahdi's forces. But by my side, and with my knowledge of Arabic and of Mussulman ways, you may get away safely in spite of everything.'

Sir Austen laid his hand gently on his new friend's shoulder. 'My dear fellow,' he said in a tone of unwonted kindness and cordiality, 'for Heaven's sake, don't deceive yourself about this. Don't lay that flattering unction to your soul. Make up your mind at once for the worst. Escape or safety is not on the cards. Unless I greatly mistake my man, the Mahdi means to attack us before to-morrow morning. And if he does, before to-morrow night, as sure as fate, we shall be all dead men. In our present condition, resistance is useless. We may sell our lives hard, but that's all. I can understand that you may want to get away. There may be somebody in England for whose sake you might wish to escape the massacre. That's natural, quite. But a massacre there'll be, as certain as death, and not a living soul in Khartoum, of the Christians at least, will ever escape from it to tell the story. We may die hard, but die we must, in any case; so the best thing for us all to do is to make our minds up to it well beforehand.'

Linnell answered without the faintest display of emotion: 'Very well. I'm prepared. Gin I mun doy, I mun doy, and there's no help for it. I'll stay by your side here and fight it out.—But Austen, one or other of us may happen to escape. If it's you, take this address I give you: you'll see whose it is: write to her that I never forgot her to the last: tell her I began to fear I might somehow have been mistaken: ask her to forgive me for having ever distrusted her.'

Sir Austen took the scrap of paper in the sacred silence with which men receive such things in a great crisis. He folded it up reverently in his pocket-book without looking at it. Then he wrote a few lines in pencil himself on a page torn out from the note-book at the end and handed them over to Linnell in return. 'Charlie,' he said in a very regretful voice, 'you're more likely by far to get away safe through this rabble of insane fanatics than I am. Your Arabic and your local colour may pull you through. I've written a word or two there to my wife. I've told her how much I mistook your character and conduct till we learned to

know one another here. I've asked her to look upon you—if I should fall—as the head of the house: you know my meaning. I've told her how much your companionship's been worth to me. If ever you get away clear from this detestable hole—by Jove, how they're fusillading away at the gate now—tell her I loved her with my last breath, and that my last thoughts were of her only.'

'Boys,' Considine said, holding his pistol hard, 'I'm sorry to be behind ye both in this matter of sentiment. I've got no wife, and I've got no sweetheart. But it's not me intention to let meself be killed here for nothing, I tell ye. I shall bowl over as many of these niggers as I can: but when the fun's all over and done, I mean to walk across Africa on me own legs, till I come out at Cape Town, if need be, before ever I'll let a nigger put daylight through me. So if ye two have any commands for home, regard me as the post—I'm the man to take them. It's me firrum intention to be buried at peace in the family vault of all the Considines in me father's own place in dear old County Cavan.'

As they spoke, Sir Austen took out his notebook once more. 'Charlie,' he said, scribbling down a few words on a blank page, 'take that up for me to the Palace to Gordon. The attack, I'm sure, will come from this side. I've been watching these fellows, and I see they're massing their men for the Bourré Gate. We must concentrate all our forces here: and I wish I felt sure of that fellow Faragh.'

Linnell took the note and turned on his heel with the quiet gliding movement of the true oriental. Considine gazed after him with an approving glance. 'He's a good fellow that,' he said, turning to Sir Austen; 'and it's very generous of him to propose to stand by you if we have to make our way out through all these blackguards.'

'And by you too,' Sir Austen added quietly.

'By me! Ah, yes; there's no reason there. But to help *you* out of Khartoum, I call really self-sacrificing.'

'Why so?' Sir Austen asked, with a faint tinge of distrust in the tone of his voice.

'Why, because, me dear sir,' the Irishman answered with true Irish bluntness, 'if *you* were to be killed, and *he* were to get away, he'd be a bar'net of the United Kingdom, for he's next in succession to the Linnell title.'

Sir Austen glanced up at him from his seat on a step with a sudden glance of suspicious doubt. 'And if *he* were to be killed,' he muttered, 'and *I* were to get away, I'd be next in succession to a far finer property than ever the Linnells of Thorpe Manor could lay claim to.'

'Ye mean the pills?' Considine suggested with a cautious smile.

'Ah, you know all about it, then,' Sir Austen answered, not without some slight symptoms of embarrassment. 'Yes, I mean the pills, and whatever thereby hangs. Charles Linnell's a rich man; and his money'd take the mortgages off the Manor without feeling it. But I'll stand by him still, in spite of that, if he'll stand by me; for after all he's a rare good fellow. Not that we need either of us trouble ourselves about titles or estates as things go now; for before to-morrow evening, Considine, I tell you the truth, we'll be all dead men in a heap together. The Mahdi'll be in possession of Khartoum by that time, and he'll treat every man-jack of us as he treated Hicks Pasha's army before us: not a soul will get back alive to England. Don't buoy yourself up with any false hopes of escape or terms. Khartoum's doomed, and every European life within it.'

THE FAUNA AND FLORA OF THE GREEK COINAGE.

The coinage of the ancient world is a priceless treasury of illustrations of contemporary history. For nearly seven hundred years before the Christian era the chief cities of the Mediterranean issued a continuous stream of engraved coins, which reflected the artistic excellence of the work of the sculptor and the architect. Hence a numismatic cabinet is a handy gallery of early art, and in many instances we are acquainted with the form of public buildings and sculptures, now lost, solely through the representations of them which appear on the money of the time. In his description of the city of Potidæa, for example, Herodotus refers to an image of Poseidon which stood by the municipal gate; while of Metapontum he says that the market-place was adorned with a statue of Apollo surrounded by laurel trees. Although both these statues have perished, we know what was the form of one of them from a silver tetradrachm of the period; and of the other, from a stater issued at the very time that the great traveller was writing his fascinating journals. The Colossus which Chares cast at Rhodes has long since disappeared; but the coins of the island still enable us to behold the countenance of the famous Helios, which Lucian claimed to be one of the sights of antiquity.

Historians have made full use of the portraits of emperors and queens, the personations of local deities, and other sources of information which are afforded by the work of early mints. But the extensive series of coin-types drawn from the animal and vegetable world has hitherto been in the main neglected by naturalists. Nearly one hundred and fifty species are represented in this way; and in some instances the only direct knowledge we have of the presence of particular animals in particular regions in pre-Christian times is derived from some local coin. As a general rule, antiquaries who make a specialism of coin-study have had little biological training, and it often happens that their descriptions of organic forms are inexact. Thus, to take one example only—coins of Agrigentum and Catana, Tarentum and Himera, bear a fine type of a prawn, which is erroneously described in many catalogues as a crayfish.

It goes without saying that organic species were as numerous in the classic world as now; and the presence on Mount Parnassus to-day of plants like the woody honeysuckle and the red helleborine is *a priori* proof that they have always grown there within the human period, even though ignored by pre-Christian art and letters. But it is impossible to compile a good fauna and flora of the early ages by direct evidence of art. There are many species mentioned in literature whose attribution is uncertain,

because coin, vase, and frieze afford no pictorial evidence in the matter. The 'ellops'—said by Lynceus of Lemnos and Varro to have been a delicacy prized by the gourmands of Rhodes —cannot with certainty be identified with the sword-fish, because that fish, striking as its form may be, was ignored by Rhodian artists.

In the second century of this era—long after the epoch of the Greek coinage was ended—a Greek physician, Dioscorides, recorded five hundred and forty-nine plants known to him, which have been tentatively identified by Sibthorp, an English physician of this century, who himself collected four times as many species as his great predecessor. But when the fact is considered that only thirty-three of these plants are drawn by contemporary mint artists, it will not be surprising to find that even Sibthorp, who knew the botany of the Mediterranean area better than Dioscorides, was doubtful as to many of his attributions. While archaic coins are instructive to the biologist in indicating the localities of particular species at definite periods, and so lightening the task of tracing the migration of living things, there are several circumstances which seriously impair the value of coin-evidence in this matter. It was very usual for colonists, such as those who migrated from Corinth, to adopt for the devices of their coinage those to which they were accustomed in the money of the mother city, and it was a common practice to utilise the field of a coin for representing some local divinity. The labours of Hercules were a favourite theme; and cities which adopted a coin-type like the Stymphalian birds—as did Perinthus, which Hercules is fabled to have founded—offer no information as to the geographical distribution of that half-mythical species. Similarly, the mouse and the snake, the raven and the hawk, the wolf and the grasshopper, the laurel and the olive, all of which were sacred to Apollo, often appeared on coins, not because they were specially abundant in the neighbourhood of the cities from which the money issued, but because those cities worshipped Apollo under one of his many forms.

For it must not be supposed that archaic mint-masters were observers of Nature for her own sake. At first, the mints were a monopoly of the priestly orders, to whom eagles and tortoises —though the number of feathers in the wing or of plates in the shell was accurately drawn —were nothing but myth types. For this reason there are many living things which must have attracted the attention of the ancients, and which yet do not happen to appear in the art records they have handed down. Bats were known in Western Asia as far back as the time of Homer, although they do not appear on any coin; and apes were imported into Babylon, Carthage, and Syria centuries before it occurred to some Egyptian moneyer of the beginning of this era to represent them on his issues.

One would expect to find the commoner quadrupeds appear in profusion on the mint issues of the ancient world; yet the weasel and jackal, which, besides the bat, are mentioned by Homer, are ignored altogether by numismatic art; and the brown bear appears once only, on a solitary fifth-century coin of Mantineia, in the mountainous region of Arcady. The boar was used by a dozen mints, mostly Italian; and the stag was as common a type as the boar. The antelope appears at Croton, in the Bay of Tarentum; and the ibex in Syria and Lycia. The characteristics of the Cretan wild-goat are faithfully exhibited on a coin of Elyrus. The distinction between the common mouse and the field-mouse is well shown in issues of Leucas and Metapontum.

There is an important group of about forty coins containing outlines of dogs, which deserve careful study. The interest of some of them is mainly mythical, as with Lælaps, the hound of Actæon, presented to Cephalos by Procris; or with the dog of Segeste, which symbolised the river Crimisus. But there are enough to show how extensive were the operations of the dog-fancier in early times. The coins afford no evidence of the development of a spaniel, there being no example of a pendulous ear, or of a mastiff, though bulldogs were undoubtedly known in the arenas of Imperial Rome. But they prove conclusively—what is shown, indeed, by the less artistic products of Egyptian pictography—that the ancients had four kinds of dogs—the wolf-dog, the hound, the greyhound, and the terrier. The Umbrians had their wolf-hounds, the Apulians of Asculum their greyhounds, the more rugged hunters of the Tuscan forests their fox-dogs. The favourite dog of Artemis Laphria, as on coins of Patræ and Sparta, was a greyhound; while Actæon's dogs must have been half-bred deerhounds. Rhegium, if the coins may be trusted, had its sheep-dogs; the Macedonian city of Mende its terriers; and Cumæ, just above the Bay of Naples, to which all the luxuries of the ancient world were brought, its poodles. Further pursuit of this line of inquiry would probably throw some useful light upon the direction of canine domestication.

It is interesting to find on a coin of Central Italy a very good representation of a couple of fighting cocks, which, if Martial be any guide, may have come either from Rhodes or Tanagra; though the cockpits of Dardanus, on the Hellespont, to which an electrum coin of the time of the Tarquins bears witness, must have been supplied by local breeders. Coin outlines of birds are a fruitful source of confusion. At least four species—the lammergeier, the golden eagle, the osprey, and the Arabian vulture, of which all but the last occur in Homer—are known amongst numismatists under the general term eagle. No attempt is made to distinguish the owls. The ostrich appears only on the later Byzantine coinage. The best drawn bird-type of all is the swan, notably on the magnificent issues of Camarina, Terina, and Clazomenæ.

The Bay of Pæstum, on the west coast of Italy, and Thurium, in the Tarentine Gulf, were the headquarters of the tunny fishery, as a fine series of coins of those cities serves to show. The skate-fish must have been frequently hawked in the market-place of Cranium by Ionian fishermen, for a fine Augustan coin-type of that species bears traces of close study of a well-grown specimen. A well-drawn species appears upon the money of the town of Gela, on the southern coast of Sicily. This is generally called a fresh-water fish, as Gela was named after the river of that name; but it is as likely

to be the coryphene, a marine species, which gave rise to the fable of the many-tinted skin of the dying dolphin. The true dolphin still infests the Adriatic and the Ægean, as it has done since history began; and the cities of the Corinthian Gulf and of the Bay of Argolis, not to speak of Syracuse, frequently used this species for their types. The similar form found on the coins of the Cephalonian town of Palé might perhaps more accurately be described as a porpoise. It is curious to find the money of Kertch bearing the device of the sturgeon, which is still met with in the rivers of South Russia.

The frequency with which the invertebrate animals are drawn by coin-artists shows the careful methods of external study then in use. The mussel which appears on the Campanian didrachms of Cumæ was cultivated in Lake Avernus. The Venusian 'cockles' of the British Museum catalogue are a species of pecten. Sepia was found all over the Mediterranean, and was used by mint-masters as far apart as Eubœa and Sicily, Etruria and Tarentum. Star-fish and crabs were common types on the coins of South Italy; locusts and grasshoppers, cicads and scorpions, on those of Sicily. Bees and wasps, some of them drawn with all the care of a Bewick, appear on the money of a score of cities, and a butterfly on a solitary Rhodian issue. The most curious type of any of this kind is one adopted by the island of Cimolos, one of the Cyclades. This island abounds in fossiliferous chalk; and its coins bear representations of echini, perhaps the only instance in classic art in which fossil remains have attracted the eye of the artist.

The illustrations of plant-life which appear on Greek coins prove that the die-sinkers of old did not aim at the production of a mere coin-picture. The loveliest flowers which graced the slopes of Athos or the Apennines were powerless to woo the heart of the moneyer. Greek art was supreme in its animalism, its sensuousness of line and contour; it had but an indifferent eye for the naturalism of floral beauty. One has but to compare the obverse with the reverse of that gold coin of Rhodes which is one of the triumphs of Hellenic art, to perceive the strength of this distinction. The head of Helios is incomparably superb; but the rose is a poor conventional flower, which, but for its history, could scarcely claim to be a rose at all.

Of the thirty-three plant species which occur, scarcely one is interesting for itself. It may be doubted whether a fifth-century coin of Pheræ does indeed represent the hellebore, as is declared by the British Museum catalogue. That species has not been met with in the Peloponnese in modern times; and its striking flowers should make a much finer show than they do on the coin in question. The poppy which frequently appears must be the opium plant. The rose was claimed by sixteen cities at least; though the best types, as one would expect, are furnished by the island of that name (Rhodes). Europe did not then know the double rose, which is the flower of English heraldry. The parsley of Argos and Caulonia was probably our English parsley; that of Selinus is said by one writer to be the wild celery. The honeysuckle, of which the finest specimens, as of many other organic forms, appear on the Metapontine coins, is always conventionalised. The olive, laurel, ivy, and vine make quite a show on the money of all cities, thanks to the popularity of Bacchus. The myrtle, if an obscure issue from Argolis of the time of Septimus Severus be excepted, is notably absent. The fig of Sicily and Asia Minor, the common *F. carica* is less frequently met with than would be expected. The oak and willow, fir and poplar, palm and cypress, are found scantily. Some of the most famous plants of classic literature, as the hemlock and the asphodel, are not represented at all.

But while flowers and leaves fell outside the special scope of the artistic genius of Greece, such attempts as were made by its mint artists to represent them did not in the main offend against the rigid canon of naturalism. It is instructive to compare the sordid conventionalism of later coinages, or even that of contemporary Rome, with the fidelity to truth which is the lesson of all Greek art. The rude devices on the native issues of pre-Roman Britain are the more contemptible because they are degraded imitations of the Macedonian staters of the second Philip, whose well-drawn horses became on the British mint dies a mere jumble of lines and dots.

The closest imitation in recent times of the ancient manner is to be found on the traders' tokens of two centuries ago. But the cocks and bulls and doves of these curious moneys are mere effigies by the side of the work of the Hellenic die-sinker; for the coins of Greece were in many instances the product of her greatest artists; and not the least of their triumphs is to be found in that large series of miniature high-reliefs which with transcendent skill portray some of the animals and plants which peopled the ancient world.

A BURMESE ŒNONE.

By E. D. Cuming.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'At last!' With this exclamation of gratitude, Mr George Farnwood, Assistant-superintendent of Police at Shwaydoungyee, laid down the brief official note which the weekly mail-launch had just brought him.

For five years he had been stationed in this tiny village on the banks of the Salween River; and for the last two he had besieged the police authorities with applications for a 'transfer' to some less solitary post. There was not another European living within fifty miles; and for months together Mr Farnwood never had a chance of speaking his mother-tongue. No wonder the curt direction to 'hold yourself in readiness to come down to Maulmain as soon as Assistant-superintendent Anderson shall arrive to take over charge of your station,' gave him profound satisfaction. When would Mr Anderson come? That was the only question now. It would not be long before he put in an appearance, George Farnwood told himself confidently; the Inspector-general of Police was not in the habit of giving his subordinates extravagantly liberal notice when he required them to move.

'It's a singular thing that they should give me a transfer just now,' mused the young man as he

threw himself into a long-armed chair and picked up a bundle of newspapers. 'I haven't sent off a report for weeks that has not contained reference to this confounded dacoit gang that's hovering about the district. If I'm good for nothing else, I know every inch of the country round, and ruffians like Boh Tsine are afraid to come near me. It is a little strange.'

'Boh,' or 'Chief' Tsine had excellent reasons for avoiding Mr Farnwood, in spite of that gentleman's modesty. Every *budmash* or bad character in the great Tenasserim division of Burma knew him well as the officer who had walked alone up to the hut where the desperado Boh Than lay concealed, and having called upon him to surrender, had shot him dead in the act of raising his gun. It was somewhat unusual for the Government to remove such an officer from a disturbed district at a critical moment; but when Mr Farnwood opened a copy of the *Rangoon Gazette* he found in his budget of papers, he discovered an item of news which threw some light upon the matter.

For some time past a storm had been brewing between King Theebaw and his British neighbours. Certain high-handed measures which the agents of the Burmese monarch had adopted towards English traders in his dominions had called forth remonstrance from the local government. Reparation had been demanded, and refused. Warning had been sent to the court of Mandalay, and received with insulting scorn. And at last the patience of Britain was exhausted, and an ultimatum had been despatched.

'That means war,' was Mr Farnwood's comment as he read the news; 'and war means annexation of the Upper Province.—Hooray! I will bet any money they mean to send me up there. They promised me promotion after the Boh Than affair.'

He threw down the paper and rubbed his hands gleefully. To escape from Shwaydoungyee was delightful; but the prospect of spending a few months amid the gaieties of Maulmain, or possibly Rangoon, prior to being sent on a mission which would offer splendid opportunities for gaining distinction, filled him with uncontrollable joy. He stood up in the veranda of the bare bungalow and fairly danced with exultation.

'Thekin!' said a sweet voice from the bottom of the stairs, 'may I come up?'

'Hallo, Mah Mee!' replied Mr Farnwood, pausing in his *pas de joie*. 'Come up, come up. How are you this evening?'

There was a clatter of sandals thrown off, and a moment later a young Burmese girl stood in the veranda—a pretty girl, according to the Burmese standard of beauty. Mah Mee's complexion was a uniform pale copper; her face was quite round; her eyes were black and almond shaped; and her figure, set off, rather than concealed, by the *tamein* or skirt which enveloped it from breast to knee, showed perfectly rounded outlines.

'Your honour is very happy,' remarked Mah Mee with the unconventional candour of her race. 'Why are you happy?'

'I am going to Maulmain,' replied Mr Farnwood in Burmese. 'I am ordered to leave Shwaydoungyee very soon.'

Mah Mee's face, which had reflected the brightness of his, suddenly became serious. 'When will your honour return?' she asked in tones of anxiety.

'Never, I hope—never any more!' He almost sang the words in his happiness.

'A-a-a-h!' exclaimed the girl, sinking upon her heels against the veranda balustrade. Her face grew a paler yellow, but Mr Farnwood did not observe the change.

'You will be sorry?' he inquired carelessly.

But Mah Mee could not answer. Ever since Mr Farnwood had taken up his quarters in the village he had been her friend; from the twelfth year of her age, when she first made his acquaintance, she had enjoyed the 'run of the house.' Never an afternoon, when he was in Shwaydoungyee, but Mah Mee might be found in the veranda of the bungalow, squatting at his feet and talking to him, or hearing stories about English people and their country beyond the sea. She missed him sorely when duty called him away into the jungle; and now he was to leave Shwaydoungyee for ever. Sorry! and she loved him with all her simple, half-savage heart.

The gong hanging in the police *thannah* or station close by rang out six o'clock as Mah Mee sat staring at him in silence; and Mr Farnwood put on his coat to go and perform his last routine duty for the day.

'You wait here,' he said to her as he ran down the stairs. 'The little fireship brought me some ice, and you shall have some when I come back.'

Mah Mee loved ice as an English girl does chocolate; but the prospect of getting a bit did not appeal to her just now; and as soon as Mr Farnwood disappeared into the *thannah* she rose from her place and glided rapidly out of the house, to seek her mother's mat hut at the far end of the village, where she could weep unseen.

'Now, Moung Louk,' said George Farnwood to the sturdy Burman police sergeant who received him with a profound *shikoh*, 'you keep your eyes wide open to-night. We have much money here, and every one in the district knows it. If Boh Tsine and his gang are anywhere about, they may take it into their heads to pay us a visit.'

Moung Louk smiled. That was very unlikely to happen, he said. Boh Tsine would be much afraid to come near Tharnwoo' Thekin after the way he had killed Boh Than.

'Don't be too sure,' replied his superior. 'Beat the gong every half-hour, to show you are awake.'

Moung Louk promised obedience; and Mr Farnwood, having received the keys of the iron chest which did duty as the local treasury, inspected the row of Snider rifles in the arm-rack against the wall and went back to the bungalow to his dinner.

'Mah Mee!' he called, as he glanced round the veranda—'Mah Mee!' But, much to his astonishment, there was no reply. 'What has come over her?' he wondered, as he sat down to the meal his Burmese 'boy' set before him. 'I never knew Mah Mee run away like that before, particularly when I had ice for her.' He did not give the young lady's sudden disappearance much thought, however; the mail

had brought him long letters from home and a large bundle of newspapers; and these supplied him with ample occupation until bedtime at ten o'clock.

Nor had he leisure to weigh the matter when he rose next morning at sunrise. Alarming news had been brought in about the dacoit gang, and Shwaydoungyee was in a state of timid excitement. A man had arrived from Kyaiksan, thirty miles away, bringing intelligence that Boh Tsine had attacked and burned that village on the previous day. There was no room to doubt the truth of his story; his own back corroborated it. He had been caught by the dacoits and flogged with a split bamboo for refusing to surrender money he did not possess. Where Boh Tsine might be at this moment, the unfortunate fellow was unable to say. As soon as that ruffian released him, he went and hid in the jungle till the dacoits had gone; and when it got dark, he set off, and ran all the way to Shwaydoungyee.

George Farnwood did not waste time in cross-examining the refugee: he left him to the care of the sympathetic villagers, and ordered a light canoe to be got ready at once; and half an hour after the man had appeared, two of the strongest paddlers in the village were skimming down the river, bearing a letter to the police authorities at Thatone, fifty miles away. Having sped them on their journey, Mr Farnwood took his next step. He selected the four constables in whom he thought he could place most reliance, and having supplied them with ten rounds of ball cartridge apiece, sent them to patrol the jungle-path which led to Kyaiksan. He had only twelve men altogether; and even had he been able to trust them, could not venture to send a detachment to seek the dacoits. He could only take precautions and act on the defensive until the reinforcements for which he had sent, arrived.

The patrol went out, unwillingly enough, and the anxious superintendent went in to snatch a hasty meal. The October sun was high in the sky; but not a man had ventured out of the village to follow his daily work in the rice-fields. The 'paddy' land belonging to Shwaydoungyee lay a few hundred yards off, through the jungle and out of sight; and no one dared show himself in the open while dacoits were known to be so near. All remained at home to squat about the rough brick-paved street, where they smoked, chewed betel, and recounted blood-curdling tales of dacoit ferocity, of which it is fair to say there were only too many well authenticated in currency.

The day wore on; but no fresh intelligence arrived to relax or increase the tension. George Farnwood, having relieved the first patrol with other constables, went to his room and threw himself on his bed to obtain a little sleep, for he knew that he must be on the alert during the ensuing night. Moung Louk might be trusted during the day; but when dark closed in, any little courage he possessed would ooze out of the tips of his fingers at the first sign of alarm. He slept longer than he intended; and when he awoke and went into the veranda, the sun had already sunk out of sight behind the lofty pagoda-crowned cliffs on the other side of the river. As he looked out over the village, he became aware that unusual stillness reigned there; and realising at once there was something amiss, snatched up his revolver belt and buckled it round him as he ran down-stairs. He found the place deserted. In every house, smoky oil lamps blazed, while mats and pillows were spread on every floor as if in readiness for guests. Only two aged women remained in the village; they were busily engaged cooking huge pots of rice, and stubbornly refused to answer questions. George Farnwood turned from them and strode back to the *thannah;* he understood what this peculiar state of affairs implied.

'Moung Wah,' he said, addressing a young policeman who wore a red 'good-conduct stripe' on the sleeve of his blue serge uniform coat, 'when did the news of Boh Tsine come?'

'Your honour,' replied the man, crouching on his heels, 'two hours ago, Moung Hpay, son of Moung Gyee, came in from seeking the buffalo he lost yesterday. He met in the jungle a stranger, who said to him: "To-night, Boh Tsine and his men will eat their rice at Shwaydoungyee." Then Moung Hpay came quickly home and told the people.'

'And every one ran away?'

'Your honour, all but Mah Tsan, Mah Way, and the policemen.'

Mah Tsan and Mah Way were the two old crones who had been left behind to get dinner ready for the dacoits.

'Where is Moung Louk?' inquired Mr Farnwood with forced calm.

'Here he is now returning; he went to relieve the patrol.'

Another trial for the unlucky superintendent. As the sergeant and his following came within the radius of the lantern in the *thannah*, each man was seen to be carrying two rifles. The patrol had relieved itself.

Moung Louk explained how they had found the arms 'piled' on the path with bayonets and cartouche boxes near, to deaf ears. Mr Farnwood's rage held him dumb; he could not trust himself to speak for long after the man had finished his story; but when he did, his voice was even and steady. 'Go up to my room,' he said to the sergeant, 'and bring down my gun and the cartridge bag; bring also a long chair from the veranda.'

Moung Louk soon returned with the articles, and Mr Farnwood settled down in the *thannah* for the night. He dared not let these craven cowards out of his sight for a moment now; and brave though he was, he shrank from the thought of sustaining the onslaught of thirty or forty dacoits with only eight trembling constables to back him. There was no alternative, however; he had his chair placed across the entrance to the *thannah*, that no one might leave without permission, and having told the men they might go to sleep if they pleased, sat down to wait and watch.

The crescent moon rose in the purple night-sky, and shone down through the softly-curving palm boughs upon the desolate village. The two old women had disappeared, no doubt into some hiding-place whither their friends had already gone; not even a pariah dog skulked among the mat huts. The earth-oil lamps burned low and

dim from the open houses; but not a sound save the scream of the crickets and the screech of an owl disturbed the stillness. An hour passed. The constables within were sleeping soundly despite their fears. Two hours; and George Farnwood, straining his ears to catch some warning sound, heard the distant crackling of twigs in the jungle. He sat upright and held his breath to listen; his heart beat more rapidly, for now he felt rather than heard the long-drawn howl whose portent he knew so well. The dacoits had come.

The men sprang to their feet and seized their arms. Mr Farnwood caught up the fowling-piece beside him and thrust in a couple of buckshot cartridges. Then turning out the light, he gave his orders in a low distinct voice, and led the way out to the raised roadway, across which he formed the men, that their fire might rake the village street.

'Kneel!' he commanded, as a second yell came from the thickets at the far end of the village. 'Be steady, men!' For, as he spoke, a horde of dark-skinned figures broke from the jungle and rushed forward, redoubling their cries.

'Fire!' A ragged volley belched forth, and shrieks of pain told that more than one shot had gone home. The smoke from his men's rifles rose, and showed Mr Farnwood the dacoits ranging themselves in a rude species of formation. Their advance had been checked, and he saw his opportunity. 'Come!' he cried, springing forward to lead the charge. 'Follow me!—Ah!'

He might well exclaim. Scarcely had he taken three steps, when he trod upon a loose brick in the treacherous path, and fell heavily forward on his face. At the same instant half a dozen shots were fired by the dacoits.

'Killed!' shrieked a constable, as their leader fell. There was a ringing clatter of firearms falling, and a wild scurrying of bare feet. When George Farnwood recovered the breath his fall had knocked out of him and sat up, he found himself alone. He glanced over his shoulder. The lamps, still shining dimly from the huts, showed the dacoits drawn up, shaking their weapons and howling defiance. Looking from comparative light into darkness, they had not seen the flight of the police, and were evidently expecting their onset.

He half rose to his feet, but fell again with a suppressed cry of dismay: he had sprained his ankle so severely that he could not put his foot to the ground. He paused a moment before moving again, and great drops of perspiration stood out upon his brow as he realised how desperate was his case. He took his resolve more by instinct than thought. Groping about on hands and knees till he recovered his gun, he contrived to hobble over the short distance which separated him from the bungalow. At the foot of the stairs he stopped to rest and look back at the dacoits. They were still awaiting their foes; but their yells were less turbulent, and they seemed nonplussed by the inaction of the police.

'They'll soon understand it,' muttered Mr Farnwood to himself as he began to climb the stairs. 'Eh!' A movement in the veranda above made him stop, and sent his hand to his pistol holster. 'Mah Mee!' he ejaculated, as he recognised the figure which approached the stairs. 'What are you doing here? Run away at once and hide in the jungle. Go out the back way; there is plenty of time.'

'I will go if your honour comes with me,' replied Mah Mee.

'I can't run away. Besides, I have hurt my foot, and can't walk.'

Mah Mee did not stop to ask questions; she ran into the dining-room and brought out a chair, which she set down by him.

'Now, see here,' he began, trying to speak sternly; 'you must be off at once. The dacoits will kill you if you stay.'

But Mah Mee sank upon her heels beside him, and begged him to let her remain. She could load his guns for him; she could fight beside him; she could not leave him alone.

'I am much afraid of the jungle at night,' she concluded in a quavering voice. 'Your honour, let me stay with you.'

Renewed howls from the dacoits attracted Mr Farnwood's attention at this moment. They had broken their ranks and were advancing cautiously from house to house, peering into each, and probing the mat walls with spears and *dahs* in search of hidden villagers.

Encouraged by the immunity with which they were allowed to loot the village, the dacoits took heart, and presently a tall man bearing a gun, and followed by half a dozen of the gang, came forward and halted just outside the village. They were evidently unwilling to approach too near the *thannah*, whose shades might conceal the police. Recognising that the 'ball' was about to commence, Mr Farnwood sent Mah Mee into his room to bring out the two *dahs* which hung there; when once the fight began there would be no time to collect weapons.

'Bring a torch!' was the order he heard given by the chief. A man ran into the nearest hut, and emerged with a roll of mat he had kindled, and which he swung to and fro to coax into a blaze. The light silhouetting the dusky forms, gave Mr Farnwood a chance; and before the torch-bearer could obey his chief's orders to throw the brand forward, two shots rang out from the bungalow veranda and two dacoits went down.

With a roar of rage, the whole gang left the agreeable pastime of looting and made a dash towards the house. They knew those two shots meant that only the Englishman was left in the village; they could make short work of him by himself.

'Stand behind me!' said Mr Farnwood, wheeling round his chair to command the stairway. 'Load my gun when I give it you, and don't be frightened.'

The narrow staircase was now thronged with dacoits who strove to press their way upward. Boh Tsine came first hurling shouts of defiance at the loudest pitch of his voice. 'Fire at me!' he yelled, beating his breast. 'Fire at me! I am gun-proof! Fire'—— He broke off with a gurgling sob, and fell back on the heads of his men, shot through the chest.

A number of the dacoits had taken their position below, to fire up into the veranda; but, thanks to the deep eaves which secured it almost

total darkness, their shots flew wide, and left Mr Farnwood to deal with those who were struggling on the stairs. His gun discharged, he passed it to Mah Mee to reload; and throwing up his revolver, emptied its contents upon the tightly-wedged crowd with terrible effect. Dead and living were heaped together in ever-increasing confusion. As the foremost fell, others forced their way past them, and met their fate in turn. The dacoit marksmen without were dismayed at the failure of their guns to kill this white man. And by-and-bye the mob retired, leaving their chief and seven men dead or dying on the stairs.

The first attack had failed. Mr Farnwood sat down in his chair and set to work to reload his revolver. The dacoits drew off to the river-bank, and squatted in a circle to hold a council of war. Presently two men left their companions and walked along the bank past the hamlet; and a few minutes later, a column of smoke rose from a distant hut, and a fierce burst of flame broke out. The dacoits had fired the village in hopes of smoking or burning out the occupants of the bungalow.

Mr Farnwood smiled scornfully. 'Like their carelessness,' he said to himself; 'the wind sets the wrong way.'

But the brilliant light of the burning huts illuminated every corner of the house, and placed him at a new and serious disadvantage. Had the dacoits not been convinced that he had some potent talisman against death by gunshot, they might have resumed their fire from the shelter of the jungle, and killed him with perfect safety to themselves. Fortunately, ammunition was a scarce commodity among them, and they were disinclined to waste it on a man who might be readily killed with cold steel. They were in no hurry to renew the assault, however, and the village was in a blaze, which lit up the country for miles round before they again began operations. They had no idea of making a direct attack this time; for, with a sinking heart, Mr Farnwood saw them separate into two parties, one of which started to walk down the river-bank while the other remained stationary.

'It is all over with us,' he thought; 'the blackguards mean to rush the house in front and rear.'

But a long time elapsed before the dacoits mustered up courage to carry out their new plan; and the first faint signs of dawn were visible in the sky, when the splintering crash of a door broken in warned Mr Farnwood to unsheath his *dah*, and gave the signal to the party in front. A few moments more and the veranda was crowded with yelling dacoits, who hacked and thrust savagely at their victim as he stood with his back against the balustrade, Mah Mee fighting like a wild-cat at his side.

A fight against such odds could have but one ending, and that followed close on George Farnwood's last discharge of his revolver. Stepping forward to ward a blow directed at the girl, his foot slipped in a pool of blood and he fell; and instantly Mah Mee flung herself upon him shrieking for his life.

A dozen *dahs* and spears were upraised in readiness to finish their ghastly work, when suddenly the shrill scream of a steam-whistle cut the morning air, calling a thousand echoes from the cliffs. One dacoit stopped to level a final vicious cut at the prostrate Englishman's neck; then took to his heels and bolted after his friends at the top of his speed. The steam-launch had brought reinforcements from Thatone in the nick of time.

MUSSELS AND THEIR CULTURE.

Notwithstanding the danger attending the consumption of mussels owing to their poisonous nature under certain conditions, to which attention was drawn in the science notes of a recent number (September 1890) of this *Journal*, the demand for them as an article of food, especially among the poorer classes in England, is so great that nearly two thousand tons are annually imported from Holland, where facilities for their cultivation are greater than in this country. The Dutch beds are stocked with brood-mussels, obtained from the open sea off the coasts of Essex and Kent, where the supply is apparently inexhaustible, thousands of tons being taken merely for manure. It should be understood that mussels as taken from the deep sea are rarely in condition for food, or even bait, and it is necessary to shift them to suitable beds on which to grow and fatten, a process which takes some years.

In England, the cultivation of mussels for food is carried on to some extent in the Thames estuary and the river Medway; but the main supply comes from the rivers Exe and Teign, in Devonshire; the latter river also furnishing Plymouth, Torquay, and Brixham with mussel-bait for line-fishing. Whitstable, Boston, and King's Lynn have also prolific mussel-beds, the produce of the first named going principally to Scotland for bait; and of the others, part to Manchester, Birmingham, and other large towns for food; and the remainder to the north for bait.

For general fishing there is no bait more favourably regarded by fishermen than mussels, although care is necessary in putting them on the hooks to ensure their remaining there. In this respect the whelk is superior, owing to its toughness and consequent tenacity to the hook. Both are saved by their shells from being preyed upon by cod and other voracious fish, and this may account for the attraction they present when divested of their armour.

The most extensive mussel-bed in Scotland is that in the Clyde estuary, covering, it is said, over four thousand acres, and treated as free to the public, although the corporation of Greenock claim part by virtue of a Crown charter. There are others in the Dornoch, Cromarty, Beauly, and Inverness Firths; and between the last named and the Firth of Tay are the Findhorn, Ythan, and Montrose fisheries. The Montrose, where great natural difficulties have been overcome, has been described as 'the one available model for all

desirous of cultivating mussels on the bed system.' There are also the Tay, Eden, and Forth beds; and some small fisheries at Dunbar and Holy Island. In Scotland, where mussels do not seem to be in much request as an article of food, it is impossible to exaggerate their value as bait; and their growing scarcity, with a corresponding increase in price, has had a marked effect on the line-fishing industry. For the small lines used for haddock, whiting, and cod, the mussel stands alone as bait; and some idea of the quantity used may be gained by the fact that about eighty millions per annum are estimated to be used in the haddock-fishery at Eyemouth alone. With such figures, the term 'scarcity' as applied to the supply is, of course, relative only to the demand of a rapidly increasing fishing population. The scarcity is attributed to the practice of using immature bait—that is, taking mussels too small; the ignorant and reckless dredging of beds, with the consequent destruction of seed; and the carrying away of young mussels with the old. The fishery has undoubtedly been carried on in an improvident manner, with no thought for the future, and little or no method of cultivation. Even the great beds in the Clyde, from which, during the last fifty years, over one hundred thousand tons have been taken, are now so exhausted and unproductive, that the fishing has been practically abandoned. Mussels have also to contend with their inveterate enemies, the dog or 'borer' whelk, which pierces the shell and sucks out the contents; and the starfish, which destroys the young mussel by suction. The beds themselves are frequently swept away by heavy surf and gales, or destroyed by the deposit on them of large masses of sand or alluvial matter.

It may not be uninteresting to glance at the conditions and methods under which mussel-culture can be most favourably carried on, and the suggestions that have been made for remedying the mussel famine, which affects more particularly the fifty thousand fishermen of Scotland, who certainly during some part of the year use mussels as bait, and who are compelled to procure them not only from the English beds but from the north of Ireland—in which country there seems to be no great local demand for them either as food or bait—and from Hamburg, at prices rendered almost prohibitive by the cost of carriage.

Briefly, the conditions favourable, indeed necessary to a productive mussel-bed are: sheltered situation, and, for choice, a shingly bottom; a certain admixture of salt and fresh water, the mussel breeding best in salt, and fattening best in brackish water; absence of shifting sand or alluvium; a supply of suitable food. Given these conditions, the mussel is sure to be found in large or small quantities; and so prolific is it, that with only reasonable care on the part of the fishers, its reproduction in unlimited quantities is certain. The spat—as the spawn of shellfish is called—should be transplanted to those parts of the bed upon which the mussel is found to thrive best; and accumulations of mud and sand should be removed by a careful scouring of the beds whenever necessary. These precautions can only, of course, be observed on beds exposed at low water, or those only covered by a depth of water rendering inspection and systematic working possible. In deep-water beds, artificial cultivation is necessarily difficult. Transplanting to increase the area, and the return of immaturely-dredged mussels to the water to prevent exhausting the supply, are practically the only precautions capable of observance.

On the French coast, mussel-fishing is successfully pursued by means of the *bouchot* or wicker system, which, though easier of management than beds, is attended with considerable initial expense, and interferes with inshore navigation. This method consists of wooden palisadings in the form of posts, with branches woven backwards and forwards, like basket-work, between the posts, which stand about six feet above the surface of the ground, and are sunk in soft mud—which, with a strong current, is a necessary condition of this system—and a foot left between the bottom of the wattling and the ground for the passage of the tide and the prevention of mud-silting. Two palisadings are desirable—one at low-water mark, the other higher up. The stocking is done by fastening on the lower *bouchot* young mussels tied in bunches in pieces of net, which rapidly attach themselves to the wattling. Animalcules rising from the muddy bottom furnish the mussels with food; and when a certain size is attained, they are transferred to the higher *bouchot*, which is more out of water between tides. The mussel thus exposed becomes acclimatised to the open air, and better fitted for transport. Under this method, mussels not only mature more rapidly than in beds, but are said to be of a better quality. It is evident that the system must be a valuable adjunct to bed-cultivation, being suitable for localities where the natural features are unfavourable to the formation of beds. Experimental *bouchots* have been attempted on the Scotch coast, but unattended by success, and it seems doubtful whether the places selected were well adapted for the purpose.

It has been shown that we are greatly dependent on importation for mussels both as food and bait; and having regard to the large extent of suitable shore all over the kingdom, it seems desirable to encourage their cultivation, particularly in or near localities where the greatest demand exists, the saving of carriage being an important consideration. So far as existing fisheries are concerned, the taking of mussels below a certain size might be prohibited, and perhaps also the dredging and sale of them for manure; while over-fished beds should be allowed some years of rest for the purpose of recovery. The formation of new ones is necessarily a somewhat speculative undertaking, entailing expenditure with no immediate profit. The foreshore of the United Kingdom belongs to the Crown or its grantees; and at anyrate that in the hands of the Crown, where suitable, and so far as is consistent with the interests of navigation, should be available for mussel-cultivation on reasonable, indeed almost nominal terms. In France, where the foreshore belongs wholly to the State, there is no difficulty in acquiring a vacant stretch for the purposes of fish-culture. It is only necessary to satisfy the authorities that the applicant's means are sufficient to enable him to cultivate, and he obtains the shore for a term of years at a

fair rent. In Holland, too, there is a system of hiring mussel 'lays' from the government at a nominal rental.

In Scotland, all mussel-beds (or scalps) on the shore, or within the territorial waters, belong to the Crown as part of its patrimonial property, and no one has a right to them except under grant from the Crown. In this respect oysters and mussels differ from other kinds of shellfish. The origin of their exception from the common-law right of public fishing is no doubt the fact of their special value, the one for food, and the other for bait, and the liability of both to destruction by indiscriminate use.

The popular idea is that it is not the mussel which poisons people, but the beard, and that being removed, the fish is perfectly wholesome. A theory has been gravely advanced on the Continent that the poisonous action of mussels on the human system is the result of imagination. To the presence of a parasite crab (*Pinnotheres pisum*) has also been attributed the unwholesome condition; but this is contradicted by the fact that this particular crab is sought after as a food in the United States. The spawn of starfish, and copper absorbed from ships' bottoms, have also been suggested, but disproved, as explanatory of the poison. The conclusion on the subject arrived at by a Consultative Committee for sea-fisheries in France, and set forth in the Report addressed in 1889 to the French Minister of Marine, may be accepted as reliable, and we cannot do better than quote it. The poison is due to the presence in the mussel—especially in the liver—of 'a volatile organic alkaloid, developed under the influence of a particular microbe, which is only found in mussels growing in stagnant and polluted waters.' In running-water, clean sewage—that is, sewage fairly free from the pollution of manufactories—is actually beneficial to the cultivation of mussels. As an instance of this may be cited the Forth mussel-bed to the west of Leith Pier, the yield from which is said to have greatly increased since the Edinburgh sewage discharged into the sea close by.

In conclusion, we may observe that it is authoritatively stated that mussels lose their poisonous property if cooked for ten minutes with carbonate of soda.

WAR EAGLE AND HIS RIDER.

'COMANCHES,' said Ad Anderson—'Comanches, as I'm a living sinner;' and he pulled his horse up sharp. 'There's a peltin' big crowd of 'em too,' he added, after a moment. 'We're in for it this time, sure.'

There were six of us together on the prairies about twenty miles from the Nueces, in Western Texas. There were my chum Tom Jones and myself; and Ad Anderson and his nephew Billy, a youngster of fourteen; and the two Arend brothers. These last two we hardly knew, for they were strangers to the rest of us, being Pennsylvania Dutch, I fancy, or something of that sort, who had come out to Texas to look for a place to settle. Ad Anderson and the rest of us were working as cowboys on the Santa Cruz ranch, and had come out across the Nueces to gather cattle. The Arends had happened along at the ranch the night before, and had joined us in the morning, saying they were going our way. They had each of them a good new Warner carbine and a belt full of cartridges; but the way they handled them and the way they sat on their horses hadn't given us Texans much confidence. Now, when a swarm of mounted men appeared suddenly over a rise six hundred yards away, and they heard Ad Anderson say 'Comanches,' they didn't stand, or ask what to do, or say a thing, but they just turned their horses' heads and put for the Nueces for all that was out. And that wasn't the worst of it, for the moment they started, Billy the boy, who was riding War Eagle, the racehorse of the ranch, turned him for home too, gave him his head, and commenced to throw the whip to him, as if he was finishing a race on the track.

But Ad Anderson knew what he was about every time. The minute Billy wheeled and ran, Ad Anderson struck the spurs into his pony—and it was no slouch of a pony he was riding either—and he was up and alongside of Billy before War Eagle was fairly into his stride. 'Chuck that whip, Billy,' he shouted, raising his right hand with the quirt in it as if to hit him—'chuck it, or I'll knock you off that horse.'

Billy turned his white face to Ad: he was sitting back in the saddle and slashing War Eagle down the shoulders with a stinging raw hide; but he obeyed Ad; and at the word, he loosed the loop off his wrist and flung the raw hide clean away.

'Now pull that horse down to a lope,' said Ad. 'You mind me, d'ye hear? Steady him! Steady there, steady.'

Ad was a man that almost everybody minded when he spoke in earnest. He had been a captain in a regiment in Hood's brigade during the war, and I reckon he hadn't been the worst captain they had. It was no easy task for Billy to get War Eagle steadied, for he was running on twenty-one feet and picking it up; but both he and the horse minded Ad's voice, and he got him down to a strong lope presently.

Meantime, Tom Jones and I were loping along behind them at a very tidy clatter. We reached down as soon as we started, and pulled our carbines out of the leather cases in which we carried them slung between the off stirrup leather and the horse's side. Tom had a Spencer cavalry carbine, a seven-shooter, and a right good one too. I had only an old Wesson rifle. We had beautiful ground to run on just here, for we were on a wagon trail from the Nueces to the Rio Grande, which crossed a high wide upland, bare of timber. As we looked back over our shoulders, we could see the Indians spread out like a pack of hounds on both sides of the trail and coming after us on the keen jump. There must have been above thirty of them, and we could hear the hi-hi-hi-yas of their yells ringing shrill down the breeze. The Arends were away ahead of us

already. Ad holloaed to them to hold up and keep cool as soon as he had got Billy to drop his whip and check his horse; but they never took any notice of what he said.

'You'll kill your horses,' we could hear him shout to them, 'running like that! There's twenty miles to go, and you've got to save 'em. Take it easy, I tell you. Pull 'em in.'

I said most men naturally did what Ad told them. There was a ring in his voice and a cool confident manner about him that made it seem a matter of course to do what he said. But those two poor fools didn't feel it so. I suppose they were just crazy with fear, and the harder they ran the more crazy they made themselves. At anyrate they took no heed of him, but went on whipping their horses and galloping as fast as they could lay leg to the ground. In five minutes they were clear out of sight over a rise. Tom and I now laid close up behind Ad and Billy, our horses all going strong; the leading Indians were some three hundred yards behind.

'Shall I try a belt at them without stopping?' said Tom to Ad. 'I could maybe give one of 'em a scare.'

'No; not yet,' answered Ad; 'it'll only make War Eagle fight for his head worse to hear you shoot; and we can't afford to waste no cartridges neither. There's a steep bank to go down about two miles ahead. If they don't crowd us too hard till then, we'll stop a minute there to blow our horses and give 'em a rattle.'

But the leading Indians flogged their war-ponies to a racing speed and closed on us fast. Two or three of them began to shoot, and we heard the ping of their bullets flying past us. Luckily, Indians are for the most part poor shots with a rifle on horseback, and we were none of us touched.

'Give 'em a turn, Tom,' said Ad. 'Aim low.' And at the word Tom Jones dropped his rein on his horse's neck and twisting his body round in the saddle, fired straight behind him. Bang!

'Rick off the ground,' he announced triumphantly; 'one of them ponies is mighty sick. I aimed low, as you told me, Cap.'

His bullet had struck the ground well in front of the Indians, and rising from the graze, had hit one of their ponies, which instantly fell to the rear. As he fired, each one of the leading Indians had dropped over the right-hand side of his horse and wheeled slightly to the right, thus covering his body completely from the shot. The effect was like the scattering of a covey of partridges when a hawk makes a swoop on them, and we gained a little distance by this manœuvre. But now a lot of them began to edge off more to the right, trying to draw up parallel to us on that side, which would enable them to use their rifles with more effect and be equally inconvenient for us. Before they could succeed in doing so, however, the wished-for bank was near. It was a place where the whole width of the high prairie broke away steeply for about two hundred yards down to a lower level. Ad turned in his saddle and took a look at the Indians. 'Billy,' said he, 'the moment we're over the edge, you slip off and hold War Eagle and my horse, and I'll hold the other two. Mind you don't let 'em slip, now. Hang on to 'em like grim death.' Then he added to Tom and me: 'Jump off, you boys, as soon as you're over the edge, and chuck me your reins. I'll hold your horses, and you give 'em what for.'

Almost as he ended we were at the edge of the slope and over it, and we all leaped off together. Throwing our reins to Ad, Tom and I knelt just under cover of the brow of the hill and opened fire. The Indians were within a hundred yards; but at the first shots they ducked behind their horses and turned away to right and left, streaming off in both directions, instead of charging right down on us. Indians hardly ever do charge straight in on men standing at bay. I loaded and fired my single-shooter as fast as I could finger the cartridges; but I heard Tom's repeater go bang, bang, bang, bang! and I heard Ad's warning voice saying, 'Steady, Tom, steady: you're shooting behind 'em. Take that white horse now, and aim a good length in front. That's one of their chiefs, I reckon.'

Ad was standing behind us a foot or two lower down the hill with the horses behind him again, so that they were quite covered by the hill from a chance bullet; but he himself standing upright was able to see over our heads where we were firing. I looked round for an instant to Tom's side of the fight while my fingers were stuffing a fresh cartridge into the gun and closing the breech. Bang went the Spencer again, and down came the white horse like a shot rabbit and rolled over his rider. Instantly two other Indians dashed up to the fallen man, and leaning down from their saddles without dismounting, they swung him up between them, and so across the withers of the horse of one of them, and bore him out of the fray.

'Mind your side, Dick!' shouted Ad to me—'mind that chap. Stop him if you can;' and looking to my own side, I saw that the leading Indian was urging his horse to go down over the brow some two hundred yards away, with the view of getting behind us in the broken ground on that part of the slope. I brought my rifle instantly to the shoulder and was taking aim, when Ad called out: 'Raise your sight, Dick, or draw a very full bead: you've got the hundred yards sight up.'

I drew a full bead, and missed.

'Too low, much,' said Ad; 'you want to allow more than that.—Now come on, boys,' he added; 'let's scoot before they can bushwhack us among this broken ground.'

We sprang on to our horses again and hurried to the foot of the hill. We had an advantage over the Indians in having the wagon trail to follow. It led down the easiest grade, and was comparatively smooth. Some of their bullets whistled past us as we ran; however, none of our horses seemed to flinch, and no rider was hit. We got away from that hill quite four hundred yards ahead of our foes.

'Choked 'em off that time,' said Ad. 'That touching up did 'em good: they won't crowd on us in the open, I reckon, quite so quick. It's that belt of timber along Jack Creek, though, that I'm thinking of now. If they was to get into that before us, it's all U P.'

Our horses were much refreshed by the short breathing spell we had given them, and we dashed ahead at three-quarter speed. The

Indians came on behind us at a steady untiring gait. They seemed much less eager, though, to close on us now. Our spirits rose.

'How 're ye, Billy?' said Ad. 'How d' ye like being shot at, eh? Are you sure you didn't bob your head when you heard the bullets whizzing over?'

'Nary bob,' said Billy with a grin. His colour had come back, and he looked himself again. 'I was too busy hanging on to War Eagle,' he continued; 'but I stayed right with him, as ye told me.'

Ere long we came in sight of two objects ahead of us in the road.

'Boys,' said Ad, turning to us, 'here 's them two Dutchmen on in front, and you can lay that their horses is plumb give out. I 'm sorry, but I don't know what we can do for 'em.'

We gained on them rapidly, and soon we could see the rise and fall of their arms as they mechanically flogged their exhausted animals. Presently we drew up alongside of them, but they took no notice of us. Their horses' heads hung down, and they were reduced to a walk. The faces of the riders were set: they looked straight before them, and seemed to see nothing. It was the Shadow of Death they were looking at.

'Hullo! rouse up, you fellers,' said Tom to them, springing off his horse. 'You'd better jump off and make play with them new-carbines, if you don't want the Comanches to get your hair.'

They did not appear to hear him, but pressed on and left us. I was holding Tom's horse while he knelt down and opened a rapid fire once more on the advancing redskins. I gave Ad my rifle and belt, and he tossed his reins to me and joining Tom, fired a couple of careful shots, and dropped an Indian. The Indians fell back again to a distance of about a quarter of a mile, and seemed to deliberate a minute. Then they dashed forward again hot-foot, trying to pass us on the right as before, though keeping at a respectful distance.

'They 've spotted the timber on Jack Creek, and they 're making for it,' cried Ad, leaping on his horse and returning me my rifle. 'Boys, we must ride for it now. If they head us there, there won't one of us get home;' and he dashed forward at a tremendous speed. In a moment we were up to the Arends again; they were flogging still, with set faces pressing on to the goal they were never to reach.

'Jump off your horses and lie down and shoot,' shouted Tom as we passed them; 'that 's your only chance.' But his words went by them like the idle wind. Fear had paralysed them. Half a minute later the Indians were upon them; they were struck to the ground unresisting, and the horrid yells of the savages rang their death-knell. A dozen of the fiends were hacking and mutilating the bodies of their victims beyond recognition. Tom swung himself round in his saddle and fired a long shot at them as they were bunched together.

'No use,' said Ad; 'nothing can help those chaps now. Ride, boys, ride, if ever you did in your lives.'

Our gallant horses answered gamely to the spur. Fully half the band of Indians were now quite abreast of us to our right, too far to shoot, indeed, with any effect, but racing us for the line of timber, that showed up hardly a mile away. If they could reach it before us and beset our road through it, we must certainly perish. White men are no match for Indians in brush, especially when out-numbered five to one. Ad's horse and Tom's and mine were doing their very best, and could do no more; but War Eagle, thanks to his racehorse blood and his light rider, was going well within himself, and was quite equal to a dash. Three of the best-mounted Indians had drawn considerably ahead of the others, and were now working in to get to the place where the trail we were following entered the timber in front of us. If they reached it and delayed us there one minute, we were done for.

Ad drew out his pistol and handed it to his nephew. 'Billy,' said he, 'we 've got to head them Indians away from the trail through the timber, or they 'll check us there, and we 'll have the whole bilin' on us before you can say "Knife." War Eagle 's still fresh, but our horses can't do more than they 're doing. You take this pistol and run War Eagle up level with them and fire at them, so as to make them keep wide. Stick to the trail; don't follow 'em; just fend 'em off. Shoot for the leading horse every time, and shoot well ahead of him. Now show your nerve. Remember we 're behind you. If they come at you, pull up short, and we 'll be alongside of you before they can get at you.'

Billy's face went a bit whiter again; but he was game. He shut his lips tight, and took the pistol and dug his heels into War Eagle, and left us three as if we had been standing still. In just no time he was a hundred yards ahead of us and abreast of those three Indians, and we saw him raise his right hand and pop went the pistol. We saw the dust fly up where the bullet struck the prairie; but the Indians still held on their course. They did not shoot back at him, for the knowledge that we were so near, I fancy, made them afraid to empty their guns at the boy. We looked for him to shoot again; but the spring of Ad's pistol was too strong for Billy to cock it with one hand, and we saw him lower it to his left hand to get a purchase. Then up it came again, popped again, and again the puff of dust showed where the ball harmlessly struck the ground.

'I had ought to have taught him better than that,' observed Ad; 'and if I have him with me long, I will, sure.—But he 's got grit, anyhow,' he added as Billy, undismayed by his failures, raised the pistol the third time and missed again. After all, the Indians were eighty or a hundred yards away from him, a tremendous range for a pistol, and shooting off a horse on the run isn't so easy as it looks in a circus.

Once more Billy raised his weapon and popped, and then we all shouted for joy. The leading Indian pony stumbled, and blundering almost on to his nose, came to a halt. His rider lit on the ground on his feet, and instantly levelling his piece, fired at Billy. The boy gave a cry and dropped the pistol; but he didn't fall off War Eagle, who kept right on to the timber. In five seconds more we were up to the spot where he had dropped it. Ad reached down from his saddle, and snatching it off the ground, held on after Billy. Tom jerked his horse to a dead stop

and leaped off. The dismounted Indian ran behind his horse, which was standing still, for shelter; but his legs showed underneath, and Tom hit him fair in the knees and doubled him up like a jack-knife. It was a neat shot. Then he fired three more shots at the two others, missing them, for all we could see, but it turned them off our line. Tom sprang on again, and we loped after Ad and the boy. We caught them up just inside the timber, Billy looking rather white and shaky with the pain, but he smiled at us.

'Come on!' said Ad—'come on, boys; we must get out of this. Billy'll do. The arm ain't broken—only an ugly flesh-wound, and he bears it like a little john-man.—Don't you be scared, Billy. If you get sick, I'll ride War Eagle and tote you. He can carry double.'

We followed the pair as fast as we could go. We could hear the yells of the Indians to our right in the timber, though we could no longer see them; but we had the advantage of the wagon trail to travel on, and went considerably faster than they could travel through the brush. Presently we came to Jack Creek and crossed it; there was no water in its bed. We continued to gallop through the timber on the other side of it, and came out again on the prairie beyond, and had gone quite four hundred yards in the open before our enemies emerged behind us.

'Jump off, boys,' said Ad, 'and send 'em word we're here.—Billy, you stay on your horse.'

We three leaped to the ground, and Tom and I opened fire again; but the Indians kept dodging in and out of the edge of the timber, and we couldn't see if we did any damage. They fired back at us; but the range was too far for the rifles they carried—at least they didn't hit us.

'Now, come on again,' said Ad; 'just jog, so as to show them we ain't afraid. They've got a sickener, I reckon. I wish we could meet a good party of the boys from the ranch, and we'd whoop 'em back again to where we found 'em.'

We were only seven or eight miles away from home now, and there was a chance of such a thing happening, though it didn't come off; but, as Ad reckoned, the Indians had had about enough of it. It is wonderful how a firm stand discourages them. Perhaps they had lost their chief. Anyhow, they retired, doubtless to gloat over the corpses of the two poor men they had murdered, and left us to make our way to the ranch unmolested. Billy didn't faint on the road; but he was most uncommonly glad to get in and rest his arm and have it dressed. He was a healthy youngster, and it healed up in three weeks.

The day after the fight, a good crowd of us well armed went out and buried the bodies of the two Arends. We found three dead war-ponies that had been killed or crippled by our bullets. Of course the Indians had carried off their dead, if there were any, of which we had no proof, though we knew some of them were hard hit. Their giving up the chase so soon looked as if they had lost some warriors. They don't care to fight so much unless they can get you at a disadvantage. Billy didn't go with us to the burying, as he had to stay at home and nurse his arm. Also, he was young, and Ad didn't want him to see the hideous work Indians make of the bodies of white men they kill. But for all that, Billy heard some of the men telling about it when they came back, and we saw his eyes glisten.

'Billy,' said Ad, 'if you'd stampeded with them poor fellers as you started to do, you'd have run War Eagle to a stand-still in five miles, and you'd be lying out there now carved up like them. But you obeyed orders and kept your nerve; and from this out we'll have to reckon you as a man in an Indian fight.'

Billy was pleased.

TREES OF OLD LONDON.

Old City Trees, dear City Trees!
Whence comes your placid spell,
You that scarce taste of sun or breeze,
Yet breathe of both so well?

The summer sun on city walls,
It hath a mournful air;
But where the old Tree's shadow falls,
The peace of home is there.

It is as if with ours and us
They had for ever grown,
And watched, as a familiar does,
All changes we have known;

As if, amid the great unrest,
Discouraged, faint, and sore,
We would creep home to Nature's breast,
And found her at the door;

As if a mother's sleepless love,
That comes not twice in life,
Hung wistful in those boughs above
To lull us from the strife.

Is it the souls of times gone by
That stir those twinkling leaves,
And make the sun kiss lovingly
Their legendary sheaves?

A Tree! It is a note from God,
Wherever it has birth;
A spirit nurtured by the clod;
A glory to the earth.

The great majestic Forest reigns,
Aloof, in might and age;
He cannot share our puny pains,
Although he may assuage.

But you, poor pent-up Trees, whose face
So kindly, freshly, bends,
You have no comrades of your race,
You are our home-born friends.

Dear City Trees! still may you grow
In nooks amidst the mart!
When innovation lays you low,
The household gods depart.

X. C.

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